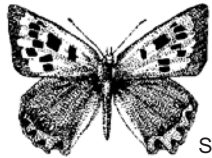


Flowering Plants, Butterflies and other Invertebrates

The short turf of NWT Weeting Heath is ideal for a variety of flowering plants typical of Breck heaths. Many of these, such as spiked speedwell, require regular soil disturbance or bare ground to set seed.

The heath is also home to some of Britain's rarest spiders, moths and beetles. Typical butterflies include the small copper and brown argus, while the pine belt attracts speckled woods.



Small copper



Spiked speedwell

Birds

Birds seen on the open heath include wheatears, lapwings and green woodpeckers. The occasional hobby feeds overhead. Little owls nest nearby and are frequently seen in the pines around the heath. Buzzards, ring ouzels, whinchats, stonechats and redstarts are also recorded.

The pine trees around the visitor centre and hides attract typical common birds, such as goldcrests, treecreepers and a variety of tits, finches and warblers. Less common birds include spotted flycatchers, crossbills, tree pipits and bramblings.



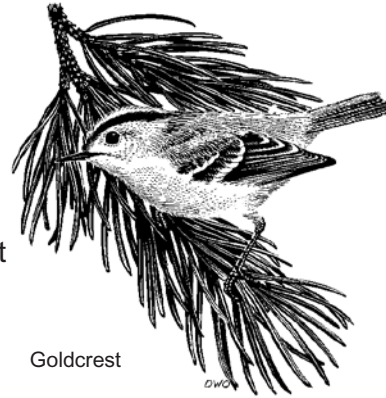
Little Owl

Visiting the Nature Reserve

The reserve is open daily, April to September, 7.00am to dusk. There is a small charge for entry, NWT members free. Please obtain a ticket from the visitor centre, or put entrance money in the box provided if the centre is closed. Group visits are welcome but booking is essential. Please do not park on the verges outside the car park entrance. There is wheelchair access to the visitor centre and hides.

For more information about your visit please ask in the visitor centre. There you can find out more about Norfolk Wildlife Trust and how you can join as a member.

Please note that no dogs (except assistance dogs) are allowed on the reserve, though they are permitted on the 4.5km forest walk.



Goldcrest

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22 Thorpe Road
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NR1 1RY

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Email: info@norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk
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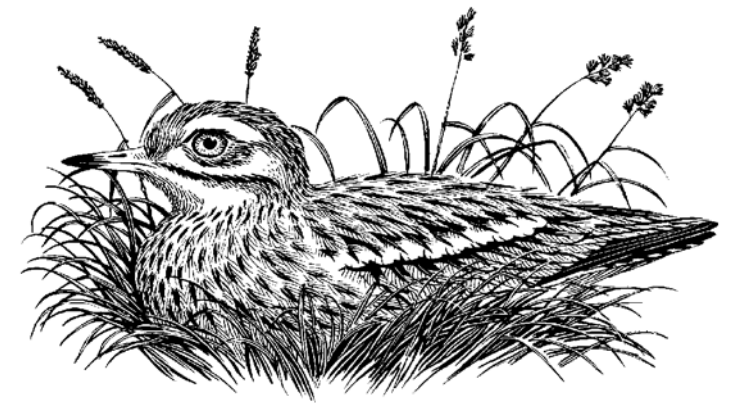
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National Nature Reserve

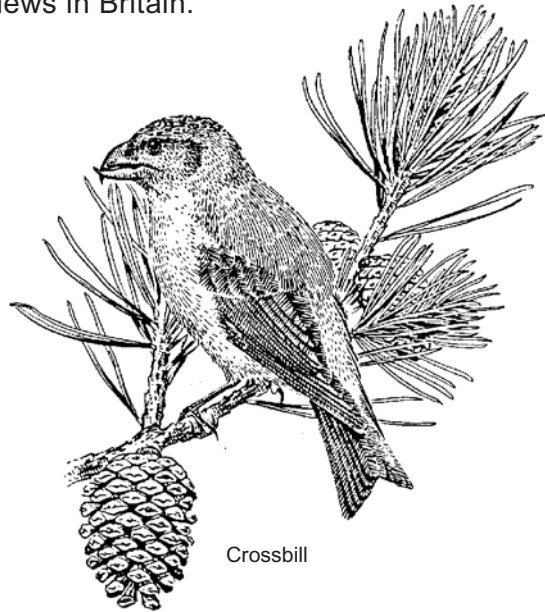


NWT Weeting Heath



Introduction

NWT Weeting Heath National Nature Reserve is one of the most important areas of heath in Breckland. Covered by open grassland and stony heath, the site is home to a number of rare plants, birds and insects. Of particular importance are the stone curlews which breed here. The hides overlooking the nature reserve are undoubtedly the best place to see stone curlews in Britain.



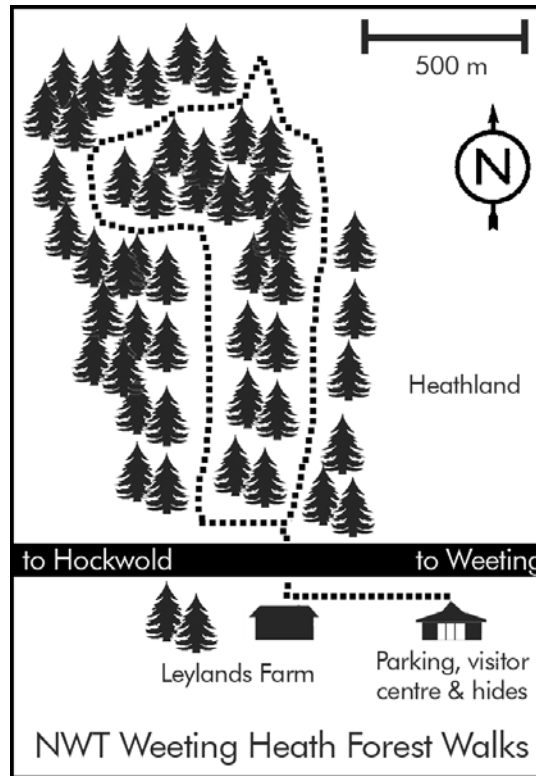
Crossbill

Original Heaths

Breckland is a unique area of grassy heath, forest and arable land covering 940km² of Western Norfolk and Suffolk. The region owes its wildlife interest to the combination of semi-continental climate, light, sandy and chalky soils and unusual land use history. As a result, the vegetation found here is similar to that of continental grasslands. However, changes in agriculture and land use have greatly altered the area and now only small fragments of the original heaths remain.

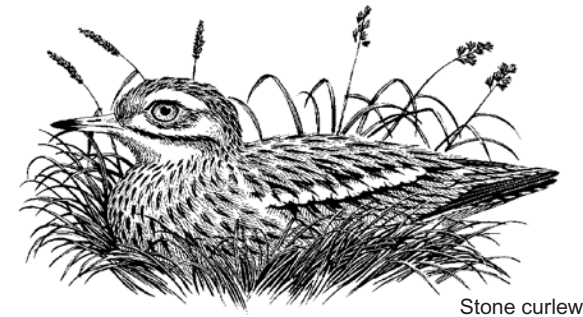
Forest Walks

As well as viewing the heathland areas of the reserve from the East and West hides, visitors can also take a forest walk along a well-marked trail (c. 4.5 km return to the car park), which allows good opportunities to see species such as crossbill.



Stone Curlews and Woodlarks

NWT Weeting Heath is most famous for the stone curlews which breed here. Once widespread across southern and eastern England, these birds have declined dramatically as their heathland habitat has been destroyed and they are now nationally rare. Stone curlews require open stony ground with short vegetation on which to breed, their nest being no more than a shallow scrape in the soil. Notoriously wary birds, stone curlews are easily disturbed by human activity - even from a distance. A frightened bird may abandon its nest leaving eggs and chicks vulnerable to predation. Please use the hides to view the birds. Woodlarks, another rare heathland bird, also breed on the nature reserve.



Stone curlew

